



Metropolitan Homelessness Commission
9:30 am, Sept. 6, 2013
Sonny West Conference Center
Howard Office Building (Fulton Complex)
700 Second Avenue South

Commissioners present: Diane Kuhn, chair; Megan Barry, Emily Evans, Jason Holleman, Burkley Allen, Mary Rolando, Dayna Lovelady, Steven Samra, Wendell Segroves, Glenn Cranfield, Phil Duke, J.C. Smith, Charles Strobel, Tom Turner, Erik Cole, Marvin Cox, Ellen Zinkiewicz, Renee Pratt, Angie Hubbard, Angie Thompson, Lt. Warren McConkey

Legal Representative: Josh Lee

Staff present: Will Connelly, director; Doug Hausken, assistant director; La Toya Carter, outreach and housing coordinator; Judith Tackett, communications coordinator; Pam McEwen, MSS Financial Director

Welcome & Roll Call

Diane Kuhn welcomed everybody and introduced Mary Rolando, the new chair of the Metro Social Services Board as the new representative from MSS.

She said the focus of the meeting will be on the *How's Nashville* campaign, specifically on the results of its 100-day campaign.

She then took roll call.

Minutes

The following changes to the attendance roster were requested: add Dayna Lovelady, take off Ellen Zinkiewicz and Angie Thompson.

With those changes, the minutes were approved.

Financials

Pam McEwen said there was not a lot to report yet. Metro had not finalized the books for the last fiscal year in time to present a final report at this meeting.

During the budget report for the current fiscal year, Ms. McEwen said that the Commission was continuing its contract with Eckman/Freeman for 90 days until the transition of the case management cases to Centerstone is complete. Ms. McEwen said she anticipated to spend between \$30,000 and \$40,000 on Eckman/Freeman for this transition.

Ms. McEwen reported on the Commission's special project fund. The Commission has \$14,400 for Project Homeless Connect. For the How's Nashville campaign, at the end of July, the balance was \$73,900.

Diane Kuhn asked whether the Commission anticipates spending that money down on housing. Will Connelly responded that money of last year's budget was spent to support people getting into housing. So far, looking at all the expenses of the Commission's budget and the How's Nashville budget, a total of \$13,136 was spend for close to 30 households. It averages a cost of \$453 per household, which is less than the anticipated \$1,000 in move-in costs.

Mr. Connelly explained that a total of 34 people have been assisted. The highest amount spent for someone was \$1,400. The reason the average cost per person is so low is because Open Table Nashville has coordinated the move-ins with furniture donations. Thanks to the efforts of Open Table Nashville, the campaign really has not spent much on furniture with the exception of purchasing beds. Other How's Nashville partners are also spending money out of their discretionary funds or budgets to cover some of the move-in costs.

However, Mr. Connelly said he was not sure how sustainable that average cost will be beyond the 100-day campaign. Diane Kuhn asked whether he thought that the \$1,000 would be realistic if we needed to purchase more furniture. Mr. Connelly said yes.

Megan Barry asked whether it was possible to see a separate expenditure/report that reflects the use of NES vouchers and bus passes, which the Commission has purchased with last year's left-over funds. Pam McEwen said she could add that to the report.

Case Management contract update

Will Connelly reported that Centerstone started to hire its team. In the meantime, the Commission is still contracting with Eckman/Freeman through Sept. 30. The Centerstone team will consist of 3 case managers, 1 outreach worker/team leader, and 1 housing specialist. The Metropolitan Homelessness Commission paid for training on Critical Time Intervention from the Center for Social Innovation, which will start in October. Will Connelly said the new contract will serve about double the amount of people than before. Diane Kuhn said there was also a little more money in the contract.

Ellen Zinkiewicz was asking whether the Commission was still coordinating with other resources for case management. She wanted to make sure she understood correctly that the contract with Centerstone was filling a gap. "So if people don't qualify for veteran case management, mental health case management, ... this will fill in?" Will Connelly said that was correct.

Diane Kuhn asked how the Commission was integrating the Centerstone case management. Will Connelly said that usually more than a dozen agencies are represented at a regular meeting on Fridays. "That's where we talk about people." He explained that this was the place where people were linked with housing and that's when discussions happened about who needed case management support and what was available. Connections now also happen during the week. "We've seen a real increase in communication among the providers."

Further discussion focused on the actual need for case management and the transition of the case management contract. Will Connelly said he wrote a letter to all the people Eckman/Freeman has been working with. In it, he explains the transition process and makes sure people get an opportunity to ask about it.

How's Nashville – Reflections on the First 100 Days

- **Housing Status**
- **Need for more affordable housing units**
- **100-Day Event**

The staff of the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission, Will Connelly, Doug Hausken, La Toya Carter, and Judith Tackett, gave a presentation of the How's Nashville 100-day campaign.

The deadline of meeting the goal of housing 200 people is Sept. 12. So far 172 people have moved into permanent housing since the launch of the campaign on June 4. Of the people who moved into housing, 39 moved into apartments provided at reduced rents by private landlords, 6 leased apartments paid for through the Section 8 Housing voucher program, 56 were housed with help from Veterans Affairs (VASH vouchers and other programs), and 71 people moved into housing through assistance from community agencies.

Key achievements of the 100-day campaign include:

- Facilitating collaborations among 30 partners from the nonprofit, business and government sectors;
- Engaging the community to focus on ending chronic homelessness through Housing First;
- Tripling the average monthly Housing Placement Rate from 19 people per month to 57 (an increase of 200%) ;
- Joining the 2.5% Club (at least 27 people move into permanent supportive housing each month);
- Creating community awareness around chronic homelessness and in the process raising more than \$90,000 in flexible money from private donations without a fundraising campaign;
- Meeting weekly with providers, all working off the same database; and
- Encouraging community-wide reporting on monthly housing placement numbers.

During the 100-day campaign the community through the *How's Nashville* movement has been able to secure 18 Section 8 Housing vouchers under a demonstration project between the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission and MDHA; create relationships with private landlords who agreed to lease units at significantly reduced rents; and improve data sharing among agencies serving Nashville's homeless population.

Key insights that were gained include:

- Collaboration allows us, as a community, to leverage existing resources;

- The campaign needs to come together to assist in the Section 8 process: Plan to assist people with finding housing opportunities, so they can utilize their vouchers before they expire;
- Having a common, defined goal was essential to improving the community's housing placement rate.

Data & Cost Savings Workgroup update

Doug Hausken reported that a survey was sent out to 80 folks with about 20 responding. He said there were some really good comments in there. Some of the information shows that “most people don’t think we’re making adequate use of data as Metro Nashville.” People believe data could be used to help secure funding, prioritize program, and making funding allocation decisions, which Mr. Hausken said, fits well with the Continuum of Care.

Mr. Hausken said there was a great list of folks ready to serve on the data workgroup. He said commissioners are invited to be on that workgroup, an invitation that was reiterated by Diane Kuhn.

Moment of Silence

Diane Kuhn read the names of people who passed away during the previous two months. A moment of silence was held in honor of the people who died.

Announcements

Will Connelly said that he heard some good news about The Contributor – that they recently received a local grant. The Commission is supporting them by buying an ad. Mr. Connelly said that the paper was a part of our community now and does a lot of good for our folks. Megan Barry asked whether there were people who are selling The Contributor who have been housed under the How’s Nashville campaign. Will Connelly said yes, there were, and they would be impacted without the Contributor income.

Ellen Zinkiewicz said The Contributor was really filling a gap. “There is not anything else in the community work-related that’s going to step up and fill that.” She said many of the vendors have no other ways to work. The Contributor offers a model that lets people work and provides dignity, she said. Steven Samra agreed and said it would be a disaster to lose the paper.

Public Hearing:

Jim Johnston said he thought this was an inappropriate place to discuss “your funding and financing with people dying in the streets.” He requested more community involvement in the plan. He said the Police department has stepped up the harassment of the homeless citizens. He said they are homeless but still citizens. “We’ve seen the same thing for the past 20 years, everything is about your finances, you don’t allow for community involvement.” He said people who speak up were not allowed on the Commission. He said commissioners were here for their own thing. “We can’t solve the problem unless we do it together. We’re all in this together. Homelessness is Nashville’s problem.” He also said he didn’t know what Nashville had against the homeless. Marvin Cox asked Mr. Johnston whether he was OK if he asked him a few questions. Mr.

Johnston agreed. Mr. Cox asked whether Mr. Johnston was homeless now, whether he was looking for housing and if anyone was assisting him with housing. Mr. Johnston said he was being assisted and there was something in Murfreesboro. But he said, "I hate to take a place, then I feel like I'm not part of it." Mr. Cox asked whether Mr. Johnston was not going to get housing until other people get housing. Mr. Johnston said yes.

Madge Johnson reported that after last time's meeting one person got his Vulnerability Index survey done. "One week later he got housing." She said *How's Nashville* works and was making a difference.

Barry Hobbes said that he was not sure about the number of folks who are homeless in Nashville. Two people gave him two different numbers. He also talked about the James A Cayce project and said he hoped people get relocated. Otherwise more people would end up on the streets. He said about The Contributor that he believes part of the problem was that they had to spend so much time in courtrooms and focusing on that lawsuit with Brentwood. Mr. Hobbes said according to USA Today, the number of homelessness is dropping nationwide. He said he hoped whatever is working is working here. He addressed Will Connelly directly saying that Nashville needed to keep him in place until 2020 if need be "because at the end of the day, it may take a little longer [to solve the problem]."

The meeting was adjourned.